

## Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-08 HA-05 AID-05 AGRE-00 IO-13  
ACDA-12 TRSE-00 OMB-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01  
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15  
USIA-06 /105 W  
-----111438 041004Z /14

R 040206Z MAR 78  
FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9667  
INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO  
CINCPAC

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A  
TAGS: PINT, KS  
SUBJ: ASSEMBLY CONCLUDES PLENARY SESSION QUESTIONING OF ROKG

REF: A. SEOUL 1195 (DTG 130851Z FEB 78), B. SEOUL 1696  
(DTG 020842Z MAR 78)

SUMMARY: ON FRIDAY, NATIONAL ASSEMBLY COMPLETED ITS QUESTION-  
ING OF ROKG MINISTERS IN PLENARY SESSION. ISSUES RAISED IN  
LAST THREE SESSIONS CONCENTRATED ON ECONOMIC AND SECURITY  
ISSUES, WITH ONE BRIEF MENTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES.  
OVERALL, SESSIONS WERE TAME, COMPARED TO EARLIER YEARS.  
END SUMMARY.

1. ON AFTERNOON OF MARCH 2 AND MARCH 3, ROK NATIONAL  
ASSEMBLY COMPLETED ITS TWO DAYS OF INTERPELLATIONS OF THE  
GOVERNMENT. INDEPENDENT KANG KIL-MAN AND NDP ASSEMBLYWOMAN  
KIM YUN-TOK ON THURSDAY RAISED STRICTLY ECONOMIC QUESTIONS,  
PRINCIPALLY COVERING LOW-WAGE POLICIES, HIGH COMMODITY  
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PRICES, AND RECENT ROKG ACTIONS TO LIMIT SPECULATION  
IN LAND. IN RESPONSE, PRIME MINISTER CH'OE KYU-HA STATED  
THAT ROKG WAS DOING ITS BEST TO RAISE WAGES, BUT THAT  
MORE ECONOMIC GROWTH WAS SUREST ANSWER TO THIS PROBLEM.  
DEPUTY PM NAM TOK-U SECONDED THIS, PROVIDING MORE  
THEORETICAL SUPPORT FOR ARGUMENTS FOR GROWTH. SIGNIFICANTLY,  
NAM APOLOGIZED TWICE ON BEHALF OF GOVERNMENT FOR HIGH

PRICES. FINANCE MINISTER KIM YONG-HWAN, IN JUSTIFYING MEASURES ROKG HAS TAKEN ARE NOT EX-POST-FACTO, BECAUSE THE MINISTRY IS AUTHORIZED TO INQUIRE FIVE YEARS INTO PAST, AND REQUIREMENT TO REPORT SALE OF HOUSES REACHES BACK ONLY ONE YEAR. HE WENT ON TO SAY THE GOVERNMENT WOULD DO ITS BEST NOT TO CAUSE TROUBLE TO GENERAL PUBLIC. ASSEMBLYMAN KANG ASKED SPECIFICALLY WHETHER OFFICE OF LABOR AFFAIRS MIGHT NOT BE ELEVATED TO SEPARATE MINISTRY STATUS, BUT WAS TOLD THAT, ALTHOUGH THAT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE IN DUE COURSE, IT IS NOT NEEDED AT PRESENT.

2. ON MARCH 3, DRP'S PAK SUK-HYON, NDP'S YI CHUNG-CHAE, AND YUJONG-HOE'S YI SUNG-YUN COMPLETED QUESTIONING, AGAIN MAINLY ON ECONOMIC ISSUES. DPM NAM REPLIED THAT HE HAD NEVER HEARD USG MAKE A LINK BETWEEN REFUSAL TO SELL GRAIN UNDER PL-480 PROGRAM AND PAK TONG-SON CASE OR HUMAN RIGHTS PROBLEMS. NAM PLEDGED TO SEE AMBASSADOR SNEIDER ON HIS RETURN AND DISCUSS THE ISSUE.

3. MINISTER OF NATIONAL DEFENSE NO CHIN-HWAN SAID THAT US SEA POWER WAS STILL STRONGER THAN USSR IN WEST PACIFIC, BECAUSE OF BETTER QUALITY. ASKED ABOUT NK SUBMARINES AND RUSSIAN FLEET'S THREAT TO KOREAN INDUSTRIES, NO SAID ROKG IS VERY CAUTIOUS AND PREPARED. NO ADDED THAT ROK WILL STRENGTHEN ITS COASTAL DEFENSES AND DISCUSS SUCH LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PROBLEMS WITH US IN SCM. ASKED ABOUT COMPENSATORY MEASURES FOR US TROOP WITHDRAWAL, NO ANSWERED THAT TRANSFER OF EQUIPMENT IS ON SCHEDULE. ADDED THAT PULLOUT MUST BE RECONSIDERED, IF CONGRESS DOES NOT PASS SUPPLEMENTARY MEASURES, BUT HE BELIEVES MEASURES WILL PASS. ON SUBJECT OF "TEAM SPIRIT 78" OPERATION, NO POINTED OUT PAST PRECEDENTS AND STATED EXERCISE HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH TROOP WITHDRAWAL. PM CH'OE, RESPONDING TO QUESTION ABOUT PRESENT ROKG POSITION ON TROOP PULLOUT, REITERATED THAT GOVERNMENT WANTS TO KEEP PRESENT US FORCES HERE, BUT PRESIDENT CARTER HAS ANNOUNCED WITHDRAWAL. HE EXPRESSED ROKG'S HOPE THAT MILITARY BALANCE WOULD BE MAINTAINED IN KOREA DURING WITHDRAWAL, AND STATED POSITION THAT SUPPLEMENTATION OF ROK FORCES MUST BE ACCOMPLISHED BEFORE TROOPS LEAVE.

4. ASKED ABOUT EFFECTS OF SINO-JAPANESE PEACE AND FRIENDSHIP TREATY, PM CH'OE STATED THAT CHINA WOULD CONTINUE TO SUPPORT NORTH KOREA, RESULTING IN LITTLE CHANGE FOR ROK. HE RESTATED ROKG POSITION THAT ITS DOORS ARE OPEN TO CHINA.

5. ASKED BY DRP'S PAK SUK-HYON ABOUT "REPORTED LETTER TO PRESIDENT CARTER CRITICIZING DEPARTMENT'S HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT," PM CH'OE SAID THE FACT LETTER WAS SENT WAS VERY REGRETTABLE, IN THAT HUMAN RIGHTS IS KOREAN PROBLEM, AND LETTER MIGHT INVITE FOREIGN INTERVENTION IN ROK DOMESTIC AFFAIRS.

6. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH EMBOFFS HAVE NOT YET HAD TIME TO DISCUSS WITH ASSEMBLYMEN THEIR REACTIONS TO SESSIONS, INTERPELLATIONS SEEMED LESS POINTED AND CRITICAL OF GOVERNMENT THAN IN PREVIOUS YEARS. PERHAPS REFLECTING THIS, GALLERIES, WICH WERE PACKED DURING NDP HEAD YI'S QUESTIONING THURSDAY MORNING, WERE PARTIALLY EMPTY FRIDAY. EMBOFFS WILL FOLLOW UP WITH ASSEMBLY CONTACTS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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FOR FURTHER REACTION TO SESSION SO FAR.  
STERN

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## Message Attributes

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